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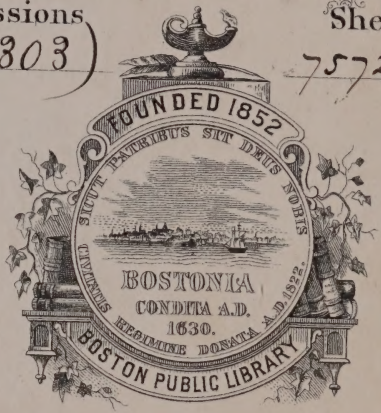

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OPENING ARGUMENT

OF

STILLMAN B. ALLEN

UPON THE

PETITIONS OF 31,401 WORKINGMEN, AND THE OWNERS OF ONE HUNDRED MANUFACTURING CORPORATIONS AND FIRMS, FOR A LAW AUTHORIZING MANUFACTURERS TO RING BELLS IN SUCH MANNER AND AT SUCH HOURS AS THE ALDERMEN OF CITIES AND SELECTMEN OF TOWNS SHALL DESIGNATE,

BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON MANUFACTURES OF THE MASSACHUSETTS LEGISLATURE.

APPENDED IS AN ABSTRACT OF THE EVIDENCE BEFORE THE COMMITTEE IN SUPPORT OF THE PETITIONS.

BOSTON:
WRIGHT & POTTER PRINTING COMPANY
18 POST OFFICE SQUARE.
1883.

ARGUMENT OF STILLMAN B. ALLEN.

MR. CHAIRMAN, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE COMMITTEE:

Massachusetts was in years past an agricultural and commercial State. Her farmers produced food for the people, and the wharves of Boston, Salem, Newburyport, New Bedford and many smaller ports were crowded by vessels arriving and departing.

All this is changed. The discovery of petroleum, the manufacture of gas, and the scarcity of whales have destroyed the old business of New Bedford. Foreign competition and treaties with our Canadian neighbors have crippled and diminished our fisheries. Sailing vessels have given place to steamers, and wooden ships to those of iron; and all these can be built and sailed cheaper by foreign nations than by us, until the American flag is almost a stranger on the high seas, and the few ship-owners left receive scarce enough from the earnings of their vessels to pay for their insurance and depreciation. Our farms cannot half supply food for 1,800,000 people, and we must look to the West for the balance.

Gradually Massachusetts has grown to be a manufacturing State, until now, while one of the smallest in size, she stands third in the Union as a producer of manufactured goods. The capital invested in manufacturing in this State is said to be $303,000,000, the wages paid annually to operatives about $128,000,000, and the value of manufactured goods $631,000,000.

It is a fair estimate that more than one-fourth of the people of the State are directly interested in manufacturing. Here is an immense class to be considered, and whatever

tends to benefit so much capital and so many workmen must benefit the whole State.

For many years it has been the custom of manufacturing corporations and firms to ring a bell early in the morning to wake up their operatives, and to notify those who may be awake that it is time to arise, and to ring another bell at the hour of commencing work. The advantage of this early bell to all classes is obvious. It enables working men and women to sleep and rest till the last moment, when they can rise, dress, get breakfast, and go to their work. Without this rousing-bell, if an operative wakes an hour before the usual time, he fears to go to sleep again, lest he may oversleep himself and be late at his work, and if he does sleep again he is quite likely to sleep beyond the time, and then hurry through his breakfast or start off without it, and even then sometimes find himself late and the cause of delay to others whose work depends upon his. For this delay he is liable to be fined, or to have a portion of his pay deducted; and starting upon such a partially paid day's work, hurried, tired and hungry, he is fretted and discontented. Employers are equally interested in this matter. If their employees are not promptly on time at their work, their machinery lies idle when it should be in motion.

It is well known that men and women who have eaten their breakfasts and walked leisurely to the mills can do more work, and better work, than those who have lost sleep or who are hurried and worried on account of oversleeping and being late.

One great evil in our country is too much work and worry and too little sleep, and any device which will enable working people to sleep and rest an extra half-hour is a public benefit. Every man whose work or business requires him to rise early knows that a reliable call at the proper minute will give this last rest and sleep.

Of course these early bells disturb some few people, not engaged in manual labor, who wish to sleep late in the morning; those, for instance, who sit up half the night for pleasure, or for doing work which should be done in the day;

pleasure-loving people, who are out until midnight at balls and parties; indolent people, who lie in bed because they have nothing to do when they get up, and others whose business or profession does not require their attendance until nine or ten o'clock.

This is to be regretted; but is it not fair and wise and just in this, as in other matters, to endeavor to do the greatest good to the greatest number?

The heavy clang of fire-bells in our large cities disturbs many people, both sick and well, at night, but they serve to warn those whose property may be in danger and to call out the engines to extinguish fires; the horse-car tracks are an annoyance to those who drive in carriages; railroads are built through farms and gardens, and night trains disturb people living along their lines; but are the fire-bells to cease? the street cars, railroads and express trains to be discontinued? Early morning bells may disturb the morning nap of some fashionable men and women, or of some nervous old gentleman; but are two hundred thousand hard-working men and women to be made uncomfortable, and property to the amount of more than a hundred million dollars therefore to be made less valuable? It is a matter of common knowledge that the operatives usually live around and near the mills, while those whose means or inclinations lead them to desire the long morning nap usually reside at such distance therefrom that the bells cannot be a serious trouble.

The immediate occasion for this petition is as follows: — The town of Plymouth, in this State, was formerly largely engaged in the fishing business. Twenty years ago her people owned about seventy fishing vessels; now she has but two. Her people, like those of many other towns, are now largely engaged in manufacturing. There is a woollen mill there, employing 150 to 200 people. They have been accustomed in the summer to ring their early bell at five or half-past five in the morning, and again at half-past six, when they commence work. About a year ago Mr. Charles G. Davis complained to one of the judges of the Supreme Court that the ringing of these bells disturbed his morning sleep, and

prayed the court to enjoin the mill-owners from ringing them. A hearing was had, and Mr. Davis testified, among other things, as follows: —

"The morning bells always wake me up. I formerly lived in the city, and I contracted the habit of going to bed late, which I have kept up all my life. I never go to bed before twelve o'clock, and oftener later than earlier. . . . . It is very difficult for me to get to sleep at night. It generally takes me from twenty-five minutes to two hours. It is very important for me to get the morning sleep. Other things disturb me in the early morning. There was a barking dog. I had it stopped. There was a rooster which my son had, which I had killed, which disturbed me. . . . . My mind never seems to go to rest when I am asleep."

It appeared, however, from the testimony of Dwight Faulkner, formerly superintendent of this mill, that for four or five years, while Mr. Davis was president of the same mill company, a steam-whistle was blown there early in the morning; and Isaac N. Stoddard, president of the Plymouth National Bank, testified that the whistle was a most unearthly sound and disturbed him very much; and Dr. Jackson of Plymouth said that the whistle was intensely annoying. Both these gentlemen added that the bell did not disturb them. Nine witnesses residing in Plymouth testified that the early bell disturbed them; among them, Misses Augusta and Marcia Delano, *who resided two and three-quarters miles from the mill*. I could not help thinking, as I read the testimony of these ladies, that it would be fatal to their rest if an able-bodied man should happen to sneeze within a quarter of a mile of them! Gen. Butler testified that he spent a night with Mr. Davis, and was awakened by the early bell. He added, however, that in Lowell he remembered six different bells which rang early in the morning. I notice among the petitions the names of several thousand working men and women employed in the Middlesex Mills, the United States Bunting Company, and other manufactories of Lowell, and I do not believe that Governor Butler would subject all these,

and tens of thousands more, to inconvenience and loss, even if his morning nap was sometimes disturbed.

On the other hand, forty-four other residents of Plymouth, with families numbering 173, and averaging to live nearer the mill than Judge Davis does, testified in substance that the bell did not disturb or annoy them, or any member of their families. Hon. Rufus S. Frost, who is interested in five woollen mills in different towns, and Mr. Frank F. Battles, agent of the Massachusetts Cotton Mills of Lowell, both testified that these early bells were necessary and essential for the successful running of mills.

After the hearing, the court issued an injunction against the mill bells being rung until 6.30 o'clock in the morning, the time of commencing work. An appeal was taken to the Supreme Court for the Commonwealth, and the decree was affirmed. Since that time the early bell has not been rung, and the operatives have been put to great inconvenience and the owners to loss; while it is to be hoped that Mr. Davis has been able to sleep, unless, perchance, disturbed by some wicked neighbor's rooster, or some dog whom the judge's wrath could not reach.

I do not propose to criticise the Supreme Court, for whose wisdom and legal attainments we all have a profound respect; but I venture to hint that in the matter, not of law, but of discretion in deciding what is an unreasonably early hour, possibly some of the business men, or the quarter of a million of working men and women disturbed by their decision, may question whether any of those grave judges ever in their lives rose at half-past five, took breakfast by candlelight, and went to a hard day's work at half-past six!

These judges do not make law. They decide what the law is, and they say that half-past six is early enough to ring bells to arouse people for work. If this is good law in Plymouth, it is good law in Lowell, Lawrence, Newburyport, Fall River, New Bedford, Ipswich, Chicopee, Holyoke, and a hundred other cities and towns in Massachusetts; and if Judge Davis should move to any of these places, he could

at once petition for all the early bells there to stop, and the same court would grant his petition. Any other nervous old gentleman could do the same thing; and the whole manufacturing interest is endangered.

One of our city editors said last week, in a leading editorial: "It may be a good thing for the operatives to be able to sleep up to the last moment at their command, with the tranquil assurance that they will be awakened at the proper time by the factory bells. But there are others to whom sleep is sweet and who do not wish to time their rising by the necessity of the workers in the mills." Yes, Mr. Editor, but there are many of the operatives and few of the others! The wise editor then suggests that "it would be better for the community to contribute for the purchase of alarm-clocks for all the factory population than to submit to rousing-bells." The editor, however, probably between the hour of waking and of rising, figured out the approximate cost of 200,000 alarm-clocks, with calls for at least 200 more each day, and the next morning he said, "It would not take any greater ingenuity or money for factory managers to devise a plan for awaking their operatives by an electrical attachment to their door-bells." Does the wise editor think, — do you think, gentlemen, — that all the factory hands have electrical bells, or any other bells, in their houses? You, as business men, will answer these suggestions.

You will understand, gentlemen, that we do not justify wanton or useless noise. We do not even ask permission to ring bells, but that municipal officers may authorize them to be rung, when in their opinion the public good requires it. The "Boston Herald" well asks the question, "If two persons, or ten persons, positively cannot endure the noises of a town, would it not be more reasonable for them to seek the quiet of the country than to try and impose a country stillness on the city?"

The "Traveller" says that, in the endeavor to silence the bells, which give rest to and at the proper time awaken the workmen, history is repeating itself, and calls attention to

the city of Sybaris in Italy, which flourished about seven hundred years before Christ. Anthon's Classical Dictionary says: "The accounts of the luxury and opulence of this city are extraordinary. To such a degree did they indulge their taste for pleasure, that a Sybarite and a voluptuary became synonymous terms. A crown of gold was awarded to those who gave the grandest entertainments. To these banquets invitations were sent out a year in advance, that they might have time to provide themselves with dresses suitable to the occasion. It was forbidden by law to exercise in this city any trade or craft, the practice of which was attended by noise, lest the sleep of its inhabitants should be disturbed, and, for the same reason, an edict was enforced against keeping roosters."

These laws might be agreeble to some who now insist so selfishly that their morning sleep shall not be disturbed; but the busy, hard-working operatives in our mills will not consent to them, and appeal to you for protection.

Now as the court has decided that it is the law that the Plymouth Mills and all others under like circumstances cannot legally ring their early bells, the only resource left was to appeal to the legislature.

It is the very purpose for which you came here, — to adjust the laws of Msssachusetts to the needs and requirements of her people.

The parties interested prepared and sent out a number of petitions; not to all — not half — but to such as they could readily call to mind, of superintendents and overseers of mills, with the request that if the operatives approved of the petition, they would sign and return the same. It was supposed that two or three thousand names might be obtained; but, to the surprise of the parties, nearly all the petitions came back numerously signed, until 366 petitions, signed by 31,401 adult working men and women, have been presented to you asking, not that rousing-bells may be rung at any specified hour, but that manufacturers may be permitted to ring such bells, in such manner, and at such hours as the

aldermen of cities and the selectmen of towns where such manufacturing is carried on, may in writing designate.

These officers are chosen by a majority of the voters in their several towns. They have the best interests of their localities to guard. They will not suffer injustice to be done to their own citizens. They will see that such course is taken by manufacturers as will on the whole be for the prosperity of their towns, and for the greatest good of the greatest number. Among these names are many of the agents and overseers. Since this committee meeting has been announced, we have received other petitions from the agents and treasurers of the Middlesex, the Pocasset, the Wetamoe, the Wamsutta, the Hamilton, the Ipswich, the Victoria, the Peabody, the Chicopee, the Taconic, the Hampden, the Osceola, the Narragansett, the Lancaster, the Amesbury, the Bel Air, the Hadley, the Pemberton, the Hasbrouck, the Ludlow, the Lowell Worsted, the Eagle Cotton, the Nonantum, the Worcester, the Bigelow Carpet, the Dwight, the Hamilton manufacturing companies, and other mills; the Clinton Wire Works, the Lawrence Duck Company, the Fitchburg Paper Company, the Lowell Machine Shop, the Bridgewater Iron Company, and seventy-six other companies; in all representing about $50,000,000 of capital.

During the last few years capital, which is dependent upon labor for its profitable use, and labor, which is dependent on capital for remunerative employment, have at times unhappily been at variance.

Capital has come to the legislature asking for laws against conspiracies and strikes, and labor has come asking laws for shorter days' work, prompter pay, and other protection. Now they come together, and standing before you hand in hand, they ask you for a common protection. Shall they not be willingly, gladly, heard, and justice accorded to them?

Just before this hearing commenced a petition in our favor was handed to me, signed by John Scott, President, Robert Howard, Secretary, and Peter Beehan, Treasurer, of and in behalf of the Spinners' Association.

I think that you may assume that when the managers of

the Fall River, the Union Cotton, the Tecumseh, the Narragansett, and fifty other mills in this State, with more than 31,000 of their operatives, stand side by side with Robert Howard of the Spinners' Union, capital and labor are united in a request for legislation which will benefit both.

The Commonwealth has done much for both. She has fully protected capital; she has lessened the hours of labor; she has required machinery to be made safer, and means of escaping danger more ready. She has provided for the education of all her children, and compelled them to come into her schools. Now let her say that no one man — no ten men — shall cause discomfort and loss to an hundred thousand.

I look forward to the time when Massachusetts shall become a great and prosperous manufacturing State; when her people shall be numbered by millions; when strife between labor and capital shall cease; when corporations shall care for their operatives as men and women; when they shall see them provided with good, comfortable houses at reasonable prices; when they shall pay them such fair price as can be afforded, and at the end of the year, after deducting a just and reasonable amount for interest upon their investment, share the balance with those whose hands have earned it; when men and women shall be ready and willing to give good, honest, cheerful, faithful labor to the owners of manufactories; when they shall feel that they have a direct interest in the result of their work and in the prosperity of their employers; when both shall see to it that all moral, all legal means are used to suppress intemperance which is gnawing at the vitals of the Commonwealth. Then children will be better educated; then taxes will be lighter; then men will not need to work so many hours; then they will earn more money; then every man will be able to bear some part of the common burden of the government, and should do so (though if, through sickness or want of good management he fails in this respect, I fear that disfranchisement is too severe a punishment); then will prosperity prevail throughout our borders, and Massachusetts be the grandest Commonwealth in the world.

ABSTRACT OF EVIDENCE FOR PETITIONERS.

CHARLES W. EATON *testified.*

I am boss spinner in the Plymouth Woolen Company. I have worked fourteen years for them altogether—four years in Plymouth and ten years in New Hampshire. I have worked in mills twenty-five or six years. I was working in Plymouth before the ringing of the early bells was stopped. I don't think I was troubled any about getting up in the morning before that. I should judge they were stopped some year and a half ago. Since then there has been very much trouble about waking in the morning. It has been very difficult for me to wake in the morning at the proper time, and a great many times, well, perhaps, on an average twice in a week, I would wake up from three to four o'clock, and I would get up to see what the time was for fear I might oversleep, and if it was as late as half-past three or four, I never attempted to sleep after that. I found soon after the bell was stopped, if I did attempt to sleep after four o'clock, I was pretty sure to sleep until six or half-past six, and consequently I was late to the mill and had to eat a cold breakfast. If one or more of the spinners is half an hour late his mules remain idle until he comes. If these spinning-mules remain idle, those who want the yarn are obliged to wait until the mules are started, so that it delays them for want of yarn. The help from the carding-room passes through the spinning-room to reach their work, and I don't think there is hardly a morning but what one or more of them are late. They come hurrying through there, some of them, just starting-time, and some of them five to ten minutes later than that. I think we are troubled as much now as we were

when the bell was first stopped. I don't think it has improved any. We attempt to reprimand the operatives for being late, and they say they had nothing to wake them in the morning, nothing to depend upon. If they happen to wake at the right time they can come in. If they are sleeping sound, there is not any thing to waken them and consequently they are late. Our amount of production is diminished not only by the amount of tardiness in my room, but of the carders, who come before me.

Cross-Examination.

Those who get in promptly, frequently come without their breakfasts. I have seen them eating their breakfast while at work. That is an every-day occurrence.

ASA A. SARGENT *testified.*

I am sixty years of age. I am employed as boss carder in the Plymouth Woolen Mills. I have worked in mills over forty years. During all that time, up to a year ago last May, there was invariably an early bell or whistle to call up the help in every mill that I have worked in. There never was any trouble in my department before the bell was stopped. Since that I have had a good deal of trouble. My help have been tardy about coming in, and often when they come in a little late, or when they come in on time, they eat their lunch after they come in. This occurs almost every day. I have known instances where they came in without any breakfast, or, at least, they said so, and went without their breakfast because they couldn't stop to get any, and worked all the forenoon.

I lie awake nights a good deal, and it has been a habit with me to catch a nap in the morning about the last thing. I could depend on the bell waking me, or rather, I could depend on the bell waking my family to get up and get my breakfast, and I got an hour's sleep that I can't get now. My family don't wake, nor I don't wake. If I wake up, which I do every night,—there is scarcely a night when I don't

get up two or three times to see what time it is, after two o'clock. Usually I sleep until two o'clock, and on getting up and going out of my room, I get waked up so it takes me a good while to get to sleep again, and oftentimes I wake up that way two or three times; and perhaps at four o'clock I wake up and see what time it is, and then I don't dare to go to sleep after that, and I lie awake and get up feeling jaded, as though I hadn't had the sleep I ought to have, and go to the mill in that way. Whenever I do go to sleep towards morning, I almost invariably sleep over. I don't get an alarm-clock, because they cost money and they are not reliable either.

The operatives don't feel good when they come in without any breakfast, and when they come in late we scold them for it, and they say at once that they will quit. I should do so myself if my employers found fault with me for not getting in. I should leave and go where there was bells. I have seriously thought of doing so any way.

Cross-Examination.

When the first bell rung, it woke up my family, and I got much more sleep. I don't keep an alarm-clock. I don't know how much it would cost. I guess it would cost a good deal to get one as often as you would need one. I know it isn't good for anything when you get it. It won't last reliably three weeks. I have never seen one that was reliable, and if not always reliable it is worse than none.

JOHN GRAHAM *testified.*

I am employed as dresser in the Plymouth Woolen Mills. I never had any trouble about waking or getting up before the bells were stopped. I lived pretty near to the mill, and the bell always woke me or my family up. Since then there have been many times that I have slept over until half-past six — until the train would go by for switching, and that would wake us up; and, getting up at that time, of course we couldn't have any chance to get any breakfast ready, and

we would have to take what we could get. I keep house and have boarders — sometimes six and sometimes four, more or less. There have been a good many cases when my wife didn't wake up to get breakfast for the boarders, and they had to do the best they could. My wife sometimes runs out to some neighbor more fortunate than she is, and gets some hot water to make tea; and sometimes they eat their breakfast cold. I don't sleep but little now, because I am worried, and so is my wife, because of thinking we may sleep over; and of course our boarders don't like it, and find fault about it; and if we wake up at three or four o'clock, we don't like to go to sleep again; and if we do, we are liable to sleep over.

EBENEZER JONES *testified.*

I am forty-two years of age; am employed as second hand in the dye-house of the Plymouth Woolen Company. I find the absence of a bell a great inconvenience. I am liable to wake up at any time after two o'clock. This morning I woke at quarter-past three, and have had no sleep since. It is dangerous, as any one knows, to go to sleep, on account of oversleeping. Before going to work I have managed to get a little something to eat, but I have often been without what you might call a breakfast. Nearly every day others in my part of the mill have been troubled in the same manner. There is no one in our department but what feels sorely the need of an early bell. They want one the worst possible way they can. I have never known any other mill where the early bell or whistle was stopped, or where they didn't have one. I have got two alarm-clocks, but they are of no use. They get out of order. I have had them fixed, but finally gave it up. I couldn't rely on them.

Cross-Examination.

I have had one alarm-clock several years. The clock is all right, but the alarm is worthless. I have carried both of my clocks to a clock-maker, and have spent all I am going

to on the alarm. I have attempted to use the clocks since I have been in Plymouth, but they were not reliable.

GEORGE NICHOLS *testified.*

I am overseer in the wool room of the Plymouth Mill. I have been employed by the Plymouth Woolen Company ever since they came down there. I was employed in Franklin with them about twelve years. I didn't see any trouble in getting the help in on time in my department while the early bell was rung. Since then a great many of them are always late. I don't have to go in early, personally. I wake up all the time from two to four o'clock in the morning, and again at five, and again at five and half-past five. I have a daughter who works in the mill, and I have to get her up and get her breakfast and get her to work. I never was troubled so when the bell was rung. I have my daughter get her breakfast, whether she is late or not. She has been late several times. Week before last my wife woke up saying it was time to get up, and I got up and found it was half-past twelve; then I woke up again at half-past four, and went to sleep and woke up at half-past six. My sleep is disturbed by the Samoset House, which is opposite my house. I generally go to bed about nine o'clock through the summer and winter. In the summer season, when the summer boarders are at the hotel, they will be telling stories on the piazza, shouting, stamping and laughing, and I can't go to sleep until after twelve o'clock. That is often the case. Several of these summer boarders found fault with the bells. They didn't want to be waked up in the morning. It is a common occurrence through the summer season for them to sit on the piazza, singing and talking. Anybody knows that that is so at a summer boarding-house. I regulate my clock by the bell.

Cross-Examination.

I went to the mills as apprentice when I was fourteen years of age and have worked in them ever since. I am now fifty-one. I never before worked in any mill where bells were not rung.

NAPOLEON SMITH *testified.*

I never had any trouble about getting up in the morning before they stopped the early bells. Since that I have been late mornings. Some mornings I have been to work without my breakfast. I have been in bed when the half-past six train goes out, and would be late. When I went to work in the morning without any breakfast, and worked all the forenoon, I felt cross, of course, and mad, because I overslept. Where I board, a great many mornings they don't wake up in season to get breakfast. Every man and woman in the mill wants the early bell rung. That feeling is general throughout the mill hands.

JOHN HOGAN *testified.*

I am at work for the Plymouth Woolen Company. Sometimes I don't wake up in the morning until quarter-past or half-past six. I am a loom fixer in the mill. When I don't wake up at half-past six I often go without my breakfast and sometimes am late when I go without it. If a loom is out of order and I am fifteen minutes late, they have got to wait until I get there. At every place I have worked before they always rung a mill bell. I worked in Dedham four years; they worked ten hours a day there, but they rang a bell at half-past five in the morning. I never had any trouble about getting up then. During the last sixteen months I have been a good many times without my breakfast, sometimes twice a week.

Cross-Examination.

I work by the day. I get the same amount for my labor now, but they find fault and I am liable to be discharged for getting late. I have worked in mills in Dedham, in Pittsfield and Schaghticoke, New York. We had bells in Pittsfield. In Schaghticoke they had a bell and whistle both. They used the bell in the morning and the whistle at noon. They rang the bell at five o'clock in the morning the first

time, and at half-past six we went to work. I worked in Hancock, this State, where they had a bell which rung at five o'clock.

CHARLES RICE *testified.*

I am employed by the Plymouth Woolen Company and have worked there about two years. I am a spinner. Never had any trouble about waking before the bell stopped. Since then it has been very annoying to me. I can't attend to my work as I ought to do. Since this bell has been stopped I wake up at two or three o'clock in the morning, and sometimes at four o'clock. I look to see what time it is and generally can't have any more sleep. I have always been used to having a good hot breakfast, and I know if I go to sleep there will be no breakfast for me. I would have to pick up a bite and go to my work. I have been to sleep again and overslept. I hadn't time to make my fire, but I would have to go, and my wife would have to send my breakfast in to me after I had gone to work. Others in the spinning-room have been late as well as myself, and I have known others to go without their breakfast. I have an alarm-clock, but I can't rely on it, and might as well be without it; if I set it to go off at five o'clock, sometimes it will go off at seven or eleven, and sometimes in the afternoon.

Cross-Examination.

If I get a good night's sleep, and get a good breakfast, I can go in and do a good day's work; but if I come in late, and am hurried and don't get washed properly, as I ought to do, and have to go without my smoke, — I like to have a smoke before I go in, and walk round, — and after that I can do a good day's work. If I get up in time I can earn as much money as I could if the bell woke me up in season. I cannot earn as much money without the ringing of the bell, because I don't wake.

ROBERT P. GRANT *testified.*

Am superintendent of Plymouth Woolen Company. The stopping of the early bell is very bad; in fact, it is disas-

trous to the discipline of the mill. We can't find very much fault with the operatives, because we know that they have no means of being waked up by a rousing-bell, and our only resource then is, if they persist in it, to discharge them. We can't dock them, because they give the absence of the bell as the reason, and when we discharge them and take new operatives on we lose time and money. As you may know, a large portion of this labor has got to be skilled labor, and we have to teach them. We lose every time we do it. I know that our production has been lessened by the stopping of the bell. I know our mill produces less than it would if the hands were called up by an early bell. Every department in the mill is supposed to be balanced properly; so if we start them at half-past six promptly, they will all move without any unnecessary loss; but if, for any reason, one of the carders is late, or a spinner is late, it stops so much machinery, and leaves a surplus in the carding-room, getting ahead of the jacks. It disarranges the work. If the man who runs the picker is late, the carders have to stop if there is no work ahead of the picker. If the carder is late, the spinners have to wait, and if the spinners are late or delayed, the weavers have to wait, so that it is delay all through.

Cross-Examination.

There is a loss in the total production of the mill, either in dollars and cents or in yards. My men prefer to work eleven hours for this reason: they are getting pay for eleven hours. If they work but ten hours, they get paid for ten hours. In other words, it is proportional, and they prefer to work eleven hours.

The women and children in our mill work but ten hours a day. Most of the men are paid by the piece, and all who work eleven hours are paid for eleven hours. So far as we know, all our men prefer to work eleven hours, as it enables them to earn more money.

The following letter from Hon. Rufus S. Frost was then read and handed to the committee, when attention was called to the printed sworn testimony of Mr. Frost, in the Davis case. Mr. Frost then testified that he had been a mill owner many years in Massachusetts; that he is now part owner in five woollen mills, which are making over a million dollars' worth of goods a year; that in all his mills bells were rung for the benefit of the help; that the discontinuance of the bells would cause the employees to be late at times, thereby disarranging the work; that he considered it essential that the employees have the benefit of the bells to awaken them; and therefore he considered the bells necessary for the successful running of a mill.

Mr. Frost added, that "whatever tends to benefit the help and make their life easier, helps the factory and the whole community."

LETTER OF HON. RUFUS S. FROST.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Feb. 19, 1883.

MY DEAR SIR:

I think the petition of thirty thousand and more of the working people in the factories of Massachusetts, that there be no legal obstruction put upon their having a rousing-bell connected with the factory in which they work, rung at a reasonable hour in the morning, thus enabling them to sleep soundly to the minute when it is necessary for them to rise, is entitled to the favorable consideration of the legislature of Massachusetts.

These thirty thousand people speak for many times their number who are similarly situated (but have not been reached), who are entitled to this privilege which has never before been denied them.

If it were probable that the ringing of the factory bell would become an annoyance to the community in general, that difficulty is sufficiently guarded by the clause in the proposed bill which reads: —

"to ring bells of such size and weight in such manner and at such hours as the board of aldermen of cities and the selectmen of towns where such manufacturing is carried on may in writing designate."

Sincerely believing that the proposed bill is fair and right,

I remain, yours truly,

(Signed) RUFUS S. FROST.

Mr. Allen then offered to produce before the committee any desired number of additional witnesses from the Plymouth Woolen Company, or from any of the one hundred manufacturing companies who have joined in the petition, or any of the owners, agents or superintendents of such mills.

The committee decided, however, that no further evidence was required from the petitioners until the objectors were when rebutting evidence would be received.

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